

III. *A Letter from the Reverend Mr. Thomas Dent, to Sir Edmund King, Kt. M. D. & S. R. S. Concerning a sort of Worms found in the Tongue, and other Parts of the Body, &c.*

*Leicester, July 2d. 1694.*

*S I R,*

I Hope you will Pardon the Trouble of this, because it will in a great measure satisfie you about that Distemper upon my Tongue, for which I have so lately had your Advice: The Observation is very Curious, and (I believe) not ordinary in the way of your Practice, if I tell you, that the chief cause of those rising Tumors fix'd upon my Tongue, proceeds from the Disease of Worms, concerning which I shall give you this following Account. In Reading Monsieur *De la Croix's* Memoirs for the Ingenious, in the Month of *July*, 1693. Letter the 30th. Dedicated to the Honourable Mr. *Joseph Ralphson*, I found an Observation, which he has published to the World, concerning the Cure of this Disease of Worms by one *Sarah Hastings*, who was very Famous in the Discovery of them in the Face, Gums, Tongue; and which she managed with such dextrous Art in the Operation, that she took them out of any Part affected with a Goose-Quill. I refer you to Mr. *De la Croix* in the foremention'd place, concerning the History of her Cures; one of which being in some respects like to my case, I was the more Curious and solicitous to enquire out, if there were any of the Worm Doctresses now in being; and hearing of one Famous at *Leicester*, I was resolv'd to write to her, describing all the Symptoms as plain as I could explain them: to which I had a return, that she believed my Disease to

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be Worms; and being resolv'd to try the Experiment, I took Coach for *Leicester*, where being come, my Doctress (Mrs. *French* by Name) no sooner inspect'd the Place, but instantly declared her Opinion, that the Distemper proceeded from Worms. The next day she fell upon her Operation, which was performed in the Presence of two Aldermen of the Town, Mr. *Gibbs*, my Lord of *Derby's* Chaplain, and several others, when piercing the Part affected with a Lancet, she drew some Blood, and soon after with a small Spatula, and another Instrument with which she opened the Orifices, she pick'd out five or six Worms at a time, some of which I have here sent to you for your more Curious Observation. She plainly shewed them to the Spectators as they came out of the Flesh; they were all alive, and moved their Heads, somewhat lesser than Ordinary Maggots. I can tell you, that in less than Eight days she took out of my Tongue more than an Hundred Worms, all almost of the same bigness, except two very large ones, which (she told me) were of a Cankerous Production: She took more than Thirty out of my Gums, which last Operation is her ordinary or daily Practice; Persons of good Note resorting to her from all Parts of the Country thereabouts. I was very Curious to Enquire out what Cures she had done of this Nature; and I found a very Satisfactory Account from Persons of some Quality and Note: And to be short, though the Operation was very surprizing, and so will (I suppose) seem to you Incredibile, yet neither I, nor any one present could discover any Fallacy, but all the plain dealing that Ocular Demonstration can admit of to prove the reality of the Operation; which I my self saw her perform upon several Patients while I was at *Leicester*. I cannot now have time to enter upon a Natural or Philosophical Reasoning about the Nature or Production of these Animals; I will leave it to your  
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Ingenious Thoughts, and the Enquiries of your Learned Society at *Gresham*. I and many others are ready to attest the Truth of what I write, nor would I willingly obtrude an Error upon the World. The Cures the Woman performs in picking out these Worms from all Putrefactive Ulcers, Tumors, and Sores, whether in the Faces, Noses, Gums, or Tongues of several Persons, prove, that such Animals are generated in those Parts. I have received some sensible good, and hope to have more Relief by her next Operation; and I do judge it very fit, that her dextrous Art should be more curiously enquired into, that it may not be lost, for the benefit of Mankind; I have wrote this more at large, because I know you are ingeniously Curious in such Matters. You or any others who are Incredulous, may have more full Satisfaction from Mr. *Newton*, a worthy Minister of the Town; and Mr. *Goodall*, and Mr. *Ludlow*, who are two of the chief Aldermen of the Town: And (I suppose) for a small Advantage my Doctress will be ready to perform her Operation, if called to *London*; which will be proper for the further Satisfaction of the Ingenious, in the Number of which you will give me leave to continue your Admirer, as I am with all Respect,

S I R,

*Your most Humble and*

*Obliged Servant,*

THO. DENT.